

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 OMB-01 ACDA-19 IO-14 AID-20 DRC-01

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R 041205Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

SECSTATE WASHDC 330

CINCPAC HAWAII

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 1908

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : PFOR, AU, TH

SUBJECT : WHITLAM VISIT

REF: A. BANGKOK 1832; B. BANGKOK 1839

1. AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY COUNSELOR GOSS TOLD THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR FEBRUARY 4 THAT THE WHITLAM VISIT HAD GONE WELL. HE WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED AT THE PRESS TREATMENT (REF A AND B). HE SAID THAT THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY HAD BROUGHT THE "BANGKOK POST" TO TASK ABOUT A MONTH AGO FOR WRITING THAT AUSTRALIA WANTED TO JOIN ASEAN. HE SAID ONE REASON FOR GOOD PRESS COVERAGE WAS THE FACT THAT THE EMBASSY SNARLS AT THE "POST" AND "THE NATION" WHENEVER THEY TREAT AUSTRALIA UNFAIRLY.

2. GOSS SAID THAT WHITLAM CAME TO THAILAND PREDISPOSED TO LIKE THE CURRENT REGIME. THE CIVILIAN LEADERS SINCE MID-OCTOBER WERE MORE TO HIS LIKING THAN THEIR MILITARY
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PREDECESSORS. WHITLAM GOT ALONG WELL WITH SANYA, ONE

REASON BEING THAT THEY ARE BOTH LAWYERS BY TRAINING.

3. GOSS SAID THAT BESIDES THE FOSTERING TO THAI-AUSTRALIAN FRIENDSHIP, THERE WERE THREE PRINCIPAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS. WHITLAM CUT THROUGH RED TAPE TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEMS HOLDING UP TWO TREATIES CURRENTLY UNDER NEGOTIATION: CULTURAL AND TRADE. ALTHOUGH THE SIGNING DID NOT TAKE PLACE DURING WHITLAM'S STAY, ALMOST NOTHING ELSE REMAINED TO BE DONE. THE THIRD ACHIEVEMENT WAS WHITLAM'S AGREEMENT TO LOOK INTO THE AUSTRALIAN POLICY FOR FOREIGN STUDENTS. GOSS EXPLAINED THAT SINCE ALL UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA IS FREE, THERE CAN BE NO MORE THAN 10,000 COLLEGE LEVEL FOREIGN STUDENTS ENROLLED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AT ONE TIME. LARGELY BECAUSE THE EXAMINATION SYSTEM FAVORS THOSE WHO SPEAK AND READ ENGLISH FLUENTLY, 8500 OF THEM ARE CHINESE. THE EMBASSY HERE HAS LONG ARGUED THAT FOR THE FUTURE OF THAI-AUSTRALIAN RELATIONS, IT WOULD BE BETTER TO HAVE MORE CHILDREN OF THE THAI RULING ELITE IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS THAN THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF CHINESE BUSINESSMEN IN MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE.

5. GOSS SAID THE VISIT WENT OFF WITHOUT MAJOR HITCHES DESPITE TWO PROTOCOL ERRORS. THE THAI MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS SENT INVITATIONS TO ALL EMBASSIES INCLUDING THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA FOR A RECEPTION FOR WHITLAM. THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY PERSUADED MFA TO RETRACT THE ONE TO THE TAIWANESE AMBASSADOR, THE OTHER WAS FORGETTING TO PROVIDE A PLACE FOR MISS WHITLAM AT A STATE DINNER. ALL IN ALL, HE SAID THAT WHITLAM IS AN IMPRESSIVE MAN. THE THAI WERE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT HIM, AND SO WAS THE ENTIRE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY STAFF.

6. UPON BEING COMPLIMENTED ON THE SMOOTHNESS OF THE VISIT, GOSS REPLIED THAT THERE ARE CERTAIN ADVANTAGES IN REPRESENTING A COUNTRY OF 13 MILLION RATHER THAN ONE OF 200 MILLION.
KINTNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, ANTIAMERICAN, TREATY RATIFICATION, MILITARY BASES, COMBAT OPERATIONS, MILITARY PLANS, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BANGKO01908
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740259/aaaacdal.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. BANGKOK 1832; B. BANGKOK 1839
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUL 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <27 NOV 2002 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: : WHITLAM VISIT
TAGS: PFOR, AU, TH, (WHITLAM, E GOUGH)
To: CANBERRA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005